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Foreign

Queen's protector quits; homosexual tie exposed

LONDON (AP) — The queen's police officer, Commander Michael Trestrail, has resigned from the police after acknowledging "a homosexual relationship over a number of years with a male prostitute," Home Secretary William Whitelaw told a stunned House of Commons yesterday.

Whitelaw's brief announcement came an hour after Scotland Yard had said Trestrail, 52, was resigning for "personal reasons," which Britons assumed were connected with the security breach that enabled an intruder to find his way into Queen Elizabeth II's bedroom at Buckingham Palace 11 days ago.

The news came as the state prosecutor's office announced that prowler Michael Fagan will not face charges for the July 9 bedroom intrusion because there was no evidence of criminal intent. Trespassing is a civil, not a criminal, offense in Britain.

Trestrail, head of police at the palace and the man directly responsible for the queen's safety, resigned on Saturday, the Yard said in a short statement.

Scotland Yard is investigating the security lapses that enabled Fagan, a 31-year-old drifter, to enter the queen's bedroom before 7 a.m. on a Friday and chat with her for nearly 10 minutes before an astonished chambermaid discovered him and summoned help.

Fagan, appearing at Bow Street Magistrates Court, was sent for trial at the Old Bailey Criminal Court on three charges: trespassing at Buckingham Palace on June 7 and stealing a half-bottle of wine, a June 26 assault on his stepson and a June 16 car theft. He was ordered held without bail.

Fagan claimed he was the son of Nazi war criminal Rudolf Hess, who has been in prison since 1941 when he flew to Britain from Germany.

State prosecutor Stephen Wooler said the palace break-in in which Fagan stole the wine "was one of a series of irrational acts on his part connected with a deterioration in his matrimonial situation."

Addressing Magistrate Ronald Bartle, Maurice Nadeem, Fagan's lawyer, said, "Let us remember what this case is about. It does not relate to the later incident when my client was in the queen's bedroom."

From the dock, Fagan shouted: "I told you not to mention anything about the queen's bedroom. I don't want her name brought into it. I would rather plead guilty than have her name mentioned in court."

Fagan was led into the packed courtroom amid tight security, accompanied by his wife, Christine, and his parents, Ivy and Michael Fagan Sr.

According to British press reports, which have been confirmed by the government, all of the palace's guards and electronic security devices did not prevent Fagan from entering Buckingham several times.

In another development, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher promised to tell the House of Commons about security at the secret British center which monitors radio and telephone communications.

Mrs. Thatcher will speak today on the matter, but she is likely to give a "broad assessment" rather than provide details, Press Association reported.

The center, called the Government Communications Headquarters, is in Cheltenham, 109 miles northwest of London.

The center, like the U.S. National Security Agency outside Washington, eavesdrops on communications around the world, trying to glean information useful to British intelligence. It has cooperative agreements with its American counterpart and those in other allied nations.

The affair began last Thursday when a Cheltenham man, Geoffrey Arthur Prime, was arraigned at nearby Hereford on a spying charge described by the prosecutor as "of the gravest possible nature."